



# Phelps Community Historical Society

September 2021 Volume 29 Issue 255



## **Phelps NY Weekend at Genesee Country Village and Museum**

1410 Flint Hill Road, Mumford, NY 14511

### **Agricultural Fair**

Saturday, October 2 and  
Sunday, October 3

10a.m. - 4p.m.

### **FREE Admission to Town of Phelps Residents**

(please bring proof of residency)

In partnership with the Mary Hicks Preston Foundation  
and the Phelps Community Historical Society.

Visit us at our table in the GCV&M Town Hall building.  
Tour historic buildings with connections to Phelps, NY.

**For more information go to [gcv.org](http://gcv.org)**



## **Cemetery Walk Resthaven and Pioneer Cemeteries** Sunday, October 24 4 - 6 p.m.

Start at Methodist Memorial Park,  
Main St., Phelps  
(adjacent to Vienna Gardens)

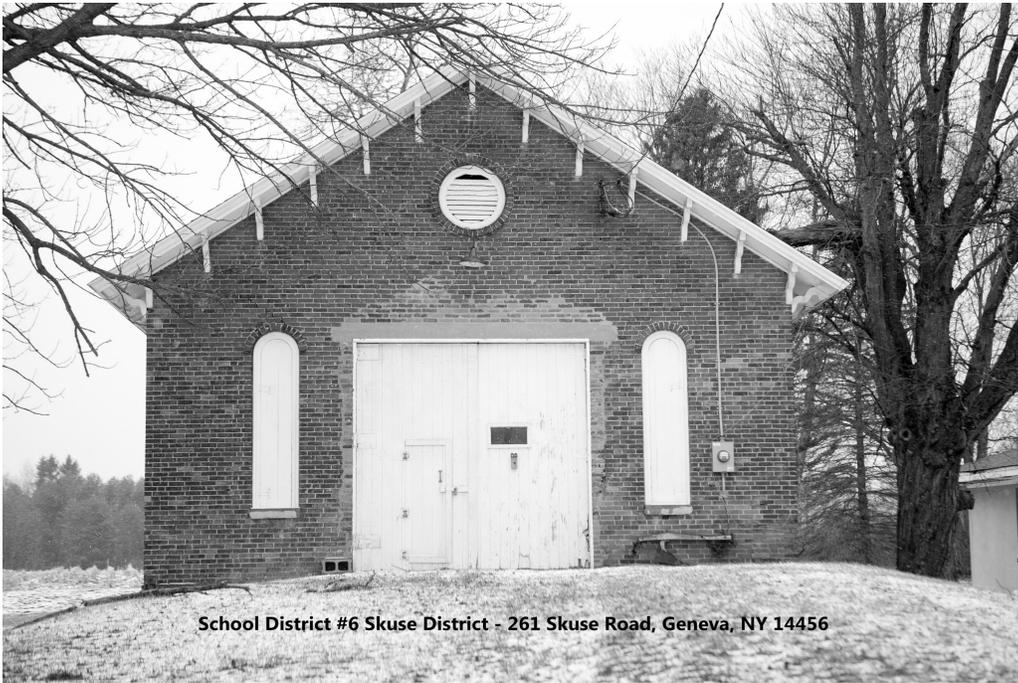
Learn about pioneers and  
persons of interest  
PCHS Program is free and  
open to the public

Refreshments will be available  
*Wear comfortable shoes!*  
Call 315-548-4940 for info



## School District # 6: The Skuse School

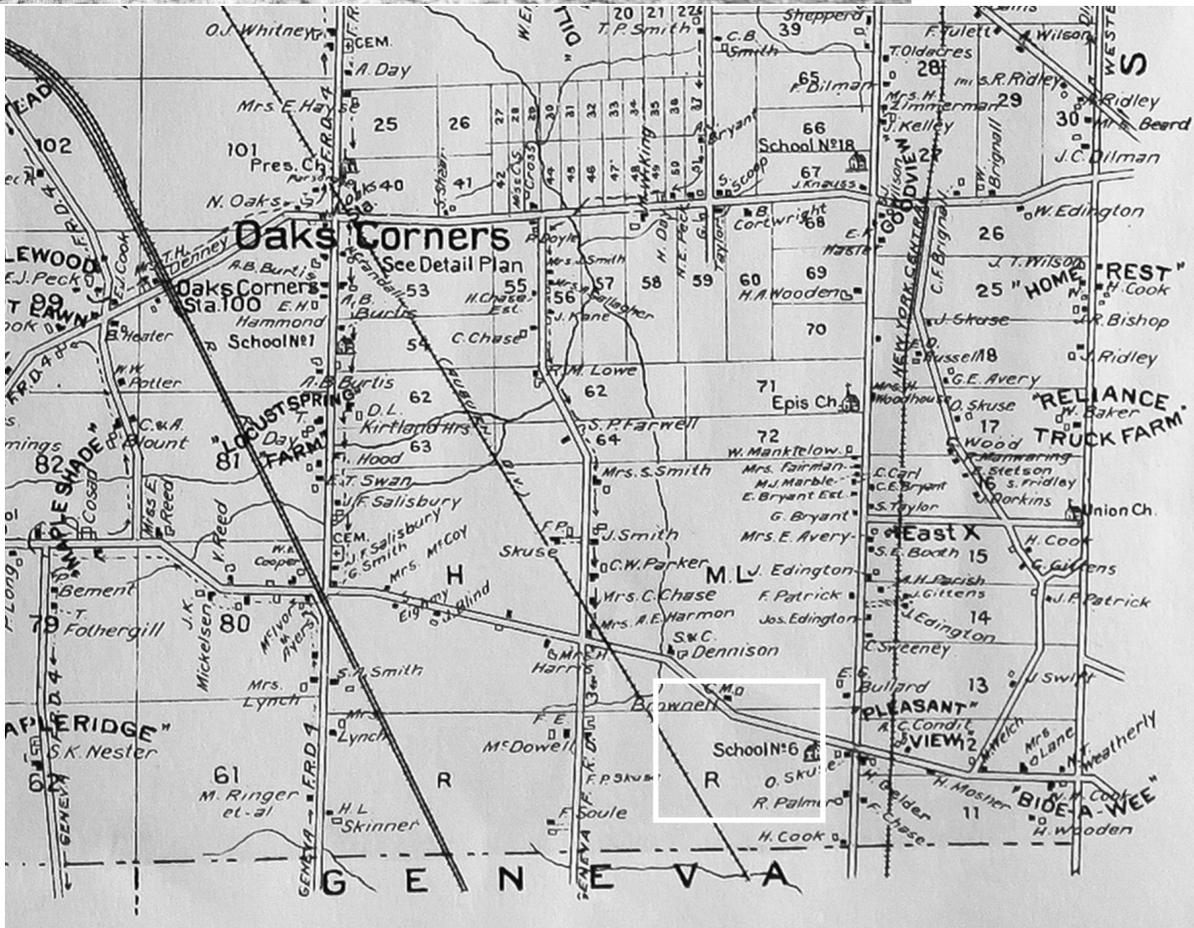
Once again, we have a Phelps school house about which the Historical Society has little knowledge. However, the building still exists and appears to be in great shape. Gone are the swings, teeter-totter (or is that the see-saw), the flagpole, and probably the bell. I would bet that since the school closed in 1940, there are people who can give us a story or two that we can provide in the newsletter sometime in the future. We encourage you to help us discover more of the history of the Skuse School.



School District #6 Skuse District - 261 Skuse Road, Geneva, NY 14456



According to PCHS files the building was at one time a shop – privately owned. The location is inside the white box on the map shown below.





*From the book "Life On A Family Fruit Farm:  
the Early Years" 2018*

## Cider Making Time by Philip S. Salisbury

A good drink of homemade cider was rewarding after all the effort it took every weekend during and after apple harvest. Cider was made using most apple varieties. Sorts and apples picked up from under the trees were the only apples used in cider making. Those apples had the quality of ripeness and good taste.

The garage where Grandpa parked his car was converted to act as the place where cider making took place. The former garage was outfitted with all the items related to making cider. Dad purchased a high volume cider press with motor, a stainless steel lined tank with a hinged lid that stood on four two-inch pipe legs with flanges at the ground level. Attached by a large hose to the stainless steel tank was bottle filling rack of stainless steel. Five or six bottles could be placed on the equipment and filled at one time. A water hookup was essential as most of the equipment used in cider making had to be kept squeaky clean.

Cider making began at about eight a.m. on Saturday. Brother John, often after a basketball game the night before, made it at the early hour to man the press. Paul and I followed at the more comfortable time of nine to nine-thirty. Apples were poured into a bin at the stomach level. McIntosh, Twenty-ounce, Cortland, Fuji, Red Delicious, Baldwin, and Rome were some of the apple varieties used to make the cider. Once the apples were in the bin they were sprayed with water to take off any dirt or leaves. A moving chain with spaced and rectangular wooden paddles took the washed apples upward to the grinding tower.

The grinding tower was a vertical box, open at the top and with a sliding door at the bottom. Inside was a grinding wheel which was powered by a medium-sized motor which kept the grinding wheel going at a high rate of speed. The apples fell from the top of the vertical box down to the grinding wheel where they were ground into a pulp. After grinding, the apple pulp fell to the bottom of the vertical box and on top of a horizontal sliding door. There was an open space between the vertical box and the next stop for the apple pulp. A square rack (hereafter called a carrier) on flanged iron wheels rested on a track of iron band which followed the frame of the apple press through the three stages of making cider.

The first stage involved putting down a square ring of wood onto the surface of the carrier. The square ring was about eighteen inches square. There were persons on either side of the

cider press. The person on the side away from the horizontal sliding door grabbed the corner of the nylon cloth that was placed over the square ring so that the corners of the cloth overlapped the sides of the square ring.

When the nylon cloth was set in place, the person on the other side of the cider press opened the horizontal sliding door and controlled how much apple pulp fell onto the cloth. When the cloth in the wooden ring was full or slightly extra-full of apple pulp the sliding door was closed.

Using paddles which were sixteen inches long and about three and one-half inches wide, the persons on either side of the press smoothed the apple pumice to slightly overfill the cloth in the wooden ring. The corners were placed over the top of the apple pumice and the square wooden ring was removed. One cloth held about two and one-half inches of apple pumice.

A latticework square of 1 inch by 3/16 inch wood slats was then placed on top of the filled and closed square of apple pulp. The square ring of wood was placed on top of the lattice wood square, the square ring, and the cloth with apple pumice in it. Another square of nylon was placed over the ring. This was repeated until there were ten, or so, apple pulp filled cloths with nine latticework squares between them.

When this was accomplished, the carrier on wheels was rolled forward on the iron bands and placed where it would be hydraulically pressed. When the starting lever to the hydraulic system was flipped on, the motor would make the middle of the cider press move the batch of apple pulp and wooden lattice squares towards a stationary lattice wood covered, stationary top of the press. The apple pulp in the cloths was squeezed and the apple juice began flowing. The amount was slow at first. As additional pressure was applied the flow of cider went from a trickle to a torrent and back to a trickle. When most all of the apple juice was squeezed out of the apple pulp, the hydraulic system was flipped off. The carrier of the racks came down slowly and finally rested in their original position. The carrier was then rolled forward on the iron banded frame of the cider press. Another full carrier was soon rolled forward to replace the pressed-out carrier that had just been removed from the hydraulic press.

(continued on page 4)

The apple pulp in the pressed carrier was then emptied, a lattice square and cloth at a time, by each of the persons on either side of the press. The pulp was emptied into a wheel-barrow. Doing so involved taking the corners of the cloth and opening them up to expose the pulp, and then taking two corners on each side of the cloth and emptying the pumice (pulp) into the wheel-barrow. The individual putting the apples in the elevator bin wheeled the wheel-barrow full of pumice to the south side of the garage adjacent to the pasture. The pumice would occasionally be fed to the milk cows and Black Angus that were pastured there.

Under the hydraulic press there was a rectangular-shaped stainless steel tank with an open top. It caught all of the fresh apple cider from the hydraulic pressing of the apple pulp. Connected to this tank was a clear plastic hose of three-quarter of an inch internal diameter that carried the cider through a small, motorized pump to the stainless steel holding tank and bottling system.

Bottling required one or two people to wash (inside and out) all gallon glass jugs to hold the cider. The washed jugs would be placed on one of the stainless steel filling spouts on the bottling apparatus. The apparatus was all stainless steel. It had about six filling spouts. The system was a gravity-fed system. A spout consisted of a stainless steel, U-shaped, tube which had its end pointing ground-ward. The front leg of the inverted U had a sealed end and an elliptical hole in its side to allow the apple cider to flow out. That section of the pipe had a stainless steel sleeve on it. The sleeve had an enlarged cylinder of stainless steel at the top. The cylinder would not fit into the neck of the bottle. When you put a

bottle on the front leg of the inverted U the sleeve would be raised and the apple cider would flow. When the bottle was full, the bottle was taken off the spout and the sleeve fell back in place, stopping the flow of cider.

On our best days we could produce between eight hundred and one thousand gallons of apple cider. The bottler(s) could not keep up with the cider press team. Thus, bottling became necessary when there was a demand for the apple cider.

One time per year we would get an order for a fifty gallon barrel of cider. The barrel's owner used the barrel to make fifty gallons of applejack. The owner made the applejack by adding sugar and raisins to a fifty gallon barrel of fresh cider. In what proportions I don't know. We were happy to sell him the cider. There is one man in this world who knew something about the finer things in life!

There is a hidden story that I will now make public. We fed the pumice to the cows and Black Angus beef. Well, one time I went to feed the cows who came when they saw me pitch-forking pumice over the barb wire defining the outline of the pasture. They came within about three feet of the barb wire and began munching on the pumice I had forked over the fence. The cows kept eating and I kept pitch-forking the pumice. After a while the cows became drunk. The pumice had fermented and the cows and beef cattle loved it.

**Note:** The Salisbury family fruit farm was called "Sunnyside Farms" and was located on Marletown Rd, Phelps, NY.



In memoriam

***Ellen Mae Champion***

PCHS Member

September 21, 1924 - August 18, 2021

***Charles F. DeWeaver***

PCHS Member

March 4, 1946 - September 10, 2021

### **Tell us Your Story**

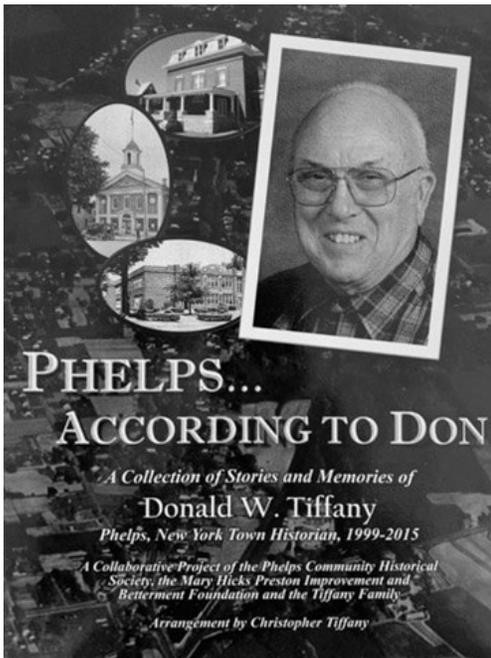
During a recent open house we heard several stories about Phelps, how great it was to grow up here. The PCHS mission is to collect and tell the stories of Phelps. If these stories do not get recorded they may soon be lost forever. Do you have a story to tell? We have volunteer writers and editors that can help you write your story. Our newsletter features stories like yours and we can always add it to our website. Please reach out to us online at

**[phelpsnyhistory.com](http://phelpsnyhistory.com)**

by email at **[histsoc2@gmail.com](mailto:histsoc2@gmail.com)**  
or phone our office at **315-548-4940**.

Thank you!

Mart VanKirk PCHS President



***Phelps...According to Don***  
 A Collection of Stories and Memories  
 of Donald W. Tiffany  
*Arrangement by Christopher Tiffany 2016*

Don lived his entire life in Phelps, NY. He worked for a car dealership, was a mechanic for Phelps Central School, took on the Town Highway Supervisor job, drove a school bus for awhile then worked as the Transportation Supervisor for the Phelps Clifton Springs School District. Don mentored hundreds of Boy Scouts and served as Phelps Town Historian. This book is a collection of the many articles he wrote for the Historical Society's newsletter. It would make a nice gift for any home, and a good conversation starter.

Sectioned off into nine interesting parts, it starts with a series bringing the town of Phelps from early beginnings thru the many dwellers who made the area their home. What was happening in the world, country, state and local area as it pertains to Phelps. It was after the American Revolution when the US encouraged the expansion of colonies to settle the new land that was obtained. Having fought in French and Indian War plus the Revolution, many saw what fertile land and water resources were here and came to settle. Don moves us through the years of growth, buildings, railroads, peppermint, wars, fires, progress,

and how what was happening around the world affected Phelps growth and development.

The next section puts more information and interesting tidbits at your fingertips. On such subjects as the downtown changing times and scenes. The many railroads moving east, west, north and south through our area. Stores, taverns, hotels, banks, hardware, farm implements, theater, doctors and others, along with the number of each .

How the railroads changed the dynamics of village life. In the section listed as Trails to Rails to Horseless Carriages, we learn why some roads were built and some just stayed tracks from one neighbor to another. Why the first road "Main Street" through east and west Vienna had to be moved north. A corduroy road was built west between Phelps and Clifton Springs to connect Clifton Springs to the stagecoach route between Geneva and Newark.

There was an annual "Fair and Cattle Show" in Phelps, a great time for hard working farm families to show off and visit with others. During the Civil War, 500 local men served in all branches of the military. Learn about "Neighbor's Home Mail", a veteran's publication that connected old comrades, posted current laws that benefitted the veterans and related stories of veterans.

Chapters include "Who's Who of Phelps"; Schools and Education; Fires and Firemen; The Religious Community; and Family, Fun & Films.

Questions : Who was the first settler in the town of Phelps?

Farmers were encouraged to grow 'peppermint hay' for two partners who had large distilleries to process the oil. Who were they?

What was the local conspiracy called "Morgan Affair"?

How many railroads ran through town?

What street originally was called "Jockey Road"?

When were the first electric street lamps and who built the electric power generating plant on Flint Creek?

How many homes and public buildings that originated in Phelps have been moved to Genesee Country Village Museum?

Find the answers in Don's book!

*Submitted by Marcia Maslyn*

# Phelps...According to Don *Arrangement by Christopher Tiffany 2016*

Available in our Gift Shoppe - Member price \$18 plus \$1.35 sales tax - total \$19.35

Online or phone order to be shipped - \$19.35 + \$10 S&H - total \$29.35

Credit card, cash or check payable to PCHS

*Great gift idea!*



## **Time and Talent**

Whether tending to the gardens, helping with the newsletter mailing, attending a committee meeting, caring for the collections, sending thank you letters, installing shades, or working on the kitchen project, every hour volunteered makes a difference!



Billee Altman  
Carol Conklin  
Dorothy Colvin  
Marilyn DeRuyter  
Bonnie Dixon  
Nicole Fess  
Barb Gillespie

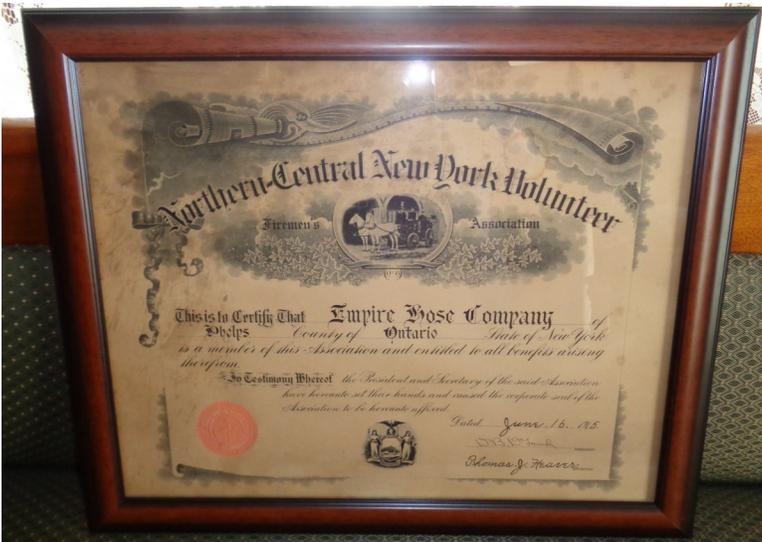
Ron Grube  
Rosa Grube  
Gary Jones  
Dennis King  
Barry Lee  
Roberta Leu  
Chris Malchoff

Dana Mark  
Kym Maslyn  
Marcia Maslyn  
Ann Oaks  
Jane Pedersen  
Sarah Riegel  
Mart VanKirk

## **Special Thank You**

Bill Broomfield for doing the masonry work on the kitchen interior wall

Dan Burns for working on the 1912 Ford Model-T



## **We've Been Framed!**

As part of the ongoing care of our collections, PCHS recently had two fire department certification documents professionally reframed in order to protect them from further deterioration. The one shown on the left is for the Empire Hose Co. dated June 16, 1915.

The second, from the Redfield Hook and Ladder Co dated July 17, 1915, was framed as a donation from the framer. Both are on display in the firemen's exhibit.

Thank you Frank Allen for your support!

[Framingbyfrank.com](http://Framingbyfrank.com)

# **MEMBERSHIP and DONATION FORM**

*If "Reminder" is highlighted please renew your membership.  
If "Final Notice" is highlighted this will be your last newsletter if dues are not paid.*

Application: New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Gift \_\_\_\_\_ Send membership card \_\_\_\_\_ For Office use:  
Individual: \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Family: \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Business: \$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Member #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Rcvd: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Summer/Winter Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. Rcvd: \_\_\_\_\_  
(If different from above) Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates in effect: \_\_\_\_\_ Computer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Index Card: \_\_\_\_\_  
Member Card: \_\_\_\_\_

**DONATION:** Amount \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In memory of (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In honor of (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you to the following for their support !***

## **Welcome New Members**

David and Shirley VerStraete  
Phelps, NY

Vienna Café & Consignment , LLC  
Main Street Phelps, NY  
(opening soon)

## **Membership Renewals**

June Avery  
Cheryl Chester  
Clarence and Sharon Curley  
Kevin and Stephanie Kelley  
Edwin Maslyn  
Kenny McLellan  
Sean Niles  
Maureen Quigley  
Beverly Rodman  
Jon Schafer  
Shirley Wikeria

## **Memorial Donations**

In memory of Ellen Champion  
*from her family*

## **Monetary Donations**

Heather Callaway  
Cheryl Chester  
Sean Niles  
Marc and Nancy Schroeder

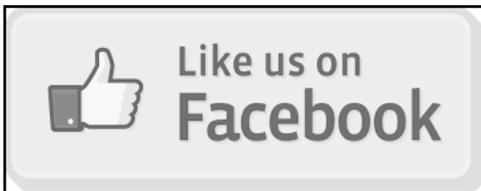
## **Item Donations**

Anna Bounds  
*Clothing*  
Ann Oaks  
*Vintage ice box*  
Virginia DeMay Rockefeller  
*School District #12 Records*  
*Reference materials*  
Marc Schroeder  
*Reference book*

**PHELPS COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

66 Main Street  
Phelps, NY 14532

NON-PROFIT ORG  
PRST STD  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit No 31  
Newark, NY 14513



**Howe House Museum**

66 Main Street  
Phelps, NY 14532  
(315) 548-4940

**E-mail:** [histsoc2@gmail.com](mailto:histsoc2@gmail.com)

**Website:** [phelpsnyhistory.com](http://phelpsnyhistory.com)

**Find us on Facebook**



**Museum Hours:**

Wednesday, Thursday and  
Friday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
or by appointment

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Mart VanKirk

**Board of Trustees**

Ron Grube, Vice President

Barbara Gillespie, Secretary

Tom Cheney, Treasurer

Marilyn DeRuyter, Trustee

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Diane Goodman